

Abstracts

The politics of emotions. Emotional discourses and displays in post-cold war contexts

Maruška Svašek

Post-socialist Europe is a fascinating area of research from the perspective of emotion theory. The paper argues that political behavior is necessarily emotional, and firmly places 'emotions' in the cultural, political, and socio-historical contexts in which they are evoked, felt, framed, expressed, and contested. The analysis focuses on three aspects of post-socialist transformation, i.e. the resurgence of nationalist sentiments, conflicts about the restitution of state property in the context of economic deprivation and legal change, and the interplay between local, national, and transnational political and emotional forces in the post-Cold War context.

Say it in rimes. Hits below the belt in Czech village politics

Birgit Müller

The distinctions between right and left, between political objectives that are pro-market or pro-communism are blurred in Czech village politics today. Having 'a communist past' as well as being at present member of the communist party matters in the unfolding struggle for power in the village, but it does not correspond to political convictions generally attributed to communism, such as a critical attitude towards privatization, markets, and foreign

multinational companies. The intense fight between two factions in the village Mokrovousy, that I will analyze here, plays precisely with the political categories of communism and democracy. It is characterized by a blend of political traditions and newly emerging interests and preferences mixing them with personal feelings and resentments. This dynamic finds a pointed expression in anonymous poems written, during the term of office of the first mayor of the opposition in the village in 1994, by both opposing factions and hung out for everybody to read in front of the village administration. These poems will be the starting point for unraveling the complexities of post-socialist village politics and the emotional involvement of the main political actors.

The liberation of Kosovo. Emotion and the ritual reenactment of war

K.M. Fierke

This article argues that the politics of international action in the Balkans was driven by conflicting public emotions. These emotions were encapsulated in a number of 'pictures' of past wars, which provided a basis for reasoning about how to respond. The pictures oversimplified a complex reality and gave meaning to the present in terms of the past. Each atrocity gave rise to conflicting public demands and an escalation in action. The result, over time, was movement toward the ritual reenactment of the most emotive of these pictures, i.e. the Second World War genocide and liberation.

Claiming ownership in post-war Croatia: the emotional dynamics of possession and repossession in Knin

Carolin Leutloff

The article discusses property conflicts in a post-war region of Croatia, in which Serbian houses were occupied by Croatian settlers (mainly refugees from Bosnia). Returning Serbian owners had great difficulties repossessing their property, while Croatian returnees repossessed their property relatively easily. Looking at the different property claims of settlers as occupiers and returnees as owners of houses, the paper shows that housing and ownership claims in the post-war situation were initially influenced by the emotional judgments of the interest groups concerned. These emotional judgments were based on their group-specific war-experiences along national lines and were deepened by nationalistic political propaganda. However, social and private property rights and norms, which were valid in pre-war times became more influential for property claims, at least on a personal level, and began to come into conflict with nationalist notions of property rights.

The emotional historiography of Venetologists. Slovene diaspora, memory, and nationalism

Zlatko Skrbušić

The author explores Venetological re-interpretations of Slovenes origins, according to which Slovenes are not Slavs but Venets, the autochthonous European population. According to such interpretation Slovenes are unrelated to anyone around them, culturally and historically distinct, peaceful, and with missionary enthusiasm. The myth provides historical drama and makes promises to the Slovene nation that are readily accepted by some Slovene nationalist groups. This paper explains the circumstances in which Venetological theory has emerged and argues that the theory

cannot be understood outside the historical framework, defined by the failure of a socialist project, the rise of nationalism in the Balkans and the eventual collapse of Yugoslavia. All these processes, signifying the collapse of old certainties, have produced circumstances which encourage the need to assert, and re-invent if necessary, the Slovene national distinctiveness. The Venetological re-interpretation of Slovene history is fundamentally a form of interrogation of the present and the search for a suitable past that would correspond to Slovene nationalist imaginings. This paper specifically focuses on the relationship between the Venetological theory and Slovene diaspora. It shows that the ideas propagated by the Venetological theory closely correspond with ideals and aspirations promoted in the diaspora settings.

Sentiments and/as property rights. Restitution and conflict in post-socialist Romania

Filippo M. Zerilli

The author explores tensions and conflicts generated by the process of restitution of real estate properties confiscated during socialism, a highly controversial, mediatized, and politicized issue in post-socialist Romanian society. Through fieldwork conducted among former owners and entitled tenants currently living in nationalized houses, the author scrutinizes their feelings and emotions about 'home', and shows how they are set in two specific narratives ('sentimental dramas') and in this way made socially - and politically - meaningful. Interestingly, despite the fact that they apparently refer to two distinct concepts of property both 'sentimental dramas' originate from (and serve to support) conflicting claims and rights as they are legitimated by national (uncertain and contested) and transnational (hegemonic neo-liberal European) legal discourses. Finally, the author suggests that both the sentimental narratives discussed

are rooted in peculiar interpretations of the socialist and pre-socialist past.

**Structures of power, spaces of violence.
Everyday life in post-peace accord rural
Guatemala**

Linda Green

Despite the signing of the United Nations-mediated peace accords in Guatemala in 1996, the vast majority of Guatemalans today live within a social landscape marked by ongoing human rights violations, increasing lawlessness and widespread suffering. The focus of this article is to interrogate local level experiences of violence and impunity that permeates the everyday lives of some Mayan people in the central highlands of Guatemala. The article explores the spaces of violence at the local level to shed light upon how and why the brutality produced by the powerful at the national level is reproduced and reshaped locally by the practices of some Mayan people toward each other in their daily lives. In particular it analyzes the relationship between the human rights violations of the recent past - carried out by the Guatemalan military and local accomplices - and the social violence of the rapid increase in common crimes in the present. It situates two contemporary expressions of violence within a larger historical framework of racism and exploitation manifested in locally-based political, economic and cultural differentiation and transformations of gendered relations and identities.

**The exterminating angel. Reflections on
violence and intersubjective reason**

Michael Jackson

This article argues that violence should not be dismissed as an antisocial or asocial phenomenon, but understood as one manifestation of the intersubjective logic of reciprocity. Using a number of ethnographic examples,

images, and anecdotes, I show how the logic of violence finds expression in rituals of reversal, acts of revenge, racist reasoning, and scapegoating. I conclude with some reflections on how the logic of reciprocity also underlies ideas, gestures, and rituals of reconciliation.

**Trust, familiarity, and otherness. How to
think about trust using the work of Norbert
Elias**

Selma Sevenhuijsen and Christien Brinkgreve

Trust and distrust are topical in current political relations, especially in conflict-ridden societies. In this article we reflect on how to conceptualize trust in an appropriate manner. Starting from the supposition that dominant trust theories think too much in terms of an opposition between individual and society, and have difficulties in dealing with dependency, vulnerability and power, we turn to the sociological theory of Norbert Elias to look for alternatives. Although trust does not figure prominently in his work he offers a dynamic view on human interdependency and the construction of we-them categories, which combines sociological, psychological and political categories. Starting from his critique on *homo clausus* we draw on the work of the Polish sociologist Piotr Sztompka to establish some 'conditions of trust'. In the last part we combine this approach with insights that spring from women's bridge building projects for democratic theories on trust.

**Becoming-state. The bio-cultural
imperialism of Sid Meier's Civilization**

Kacper Pobłocki

The article discusses the dynamism of biopolitics and cultural imperialism in the most acclaimed computer strategy game titled Civilization aspiring to simulate world history. By describing this game's roots in military re-

search and contemporary social science, the author suggests that it essentializes the grand narrative of globalization by replaying it on contingent grounds in the form of a quasi-scientific experiment. The game is compared to well-known counterfactuals and to Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. Three versions of the game are compared in order to argue that they reflect their socio-political milieu, with the latest essentializing the clash of civilization thesis. Finally, the author describes the process of internalization of the game narrative, suggesting that the imperialism of Civilization is subtler than that of traditional media, such as the novel, because the player is granted an illusion of agency while in fact personally constructing a highly ethnocentric narrative.

Publications received

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